

# Archaeological Evaluation on Park Farm

## Approach Road, Sandwell Valley

### Country Park, West Bromwich

Peter Thompson



Report 1056

November 2010

# Archaeological Evaluation on Park Farm Approach Road, Sandwell Valley Country Park, West Bromwich

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Report 1056  
November 2010

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## **Summary**

**Archaeological investigations were undertaken on land adjacent to the approach road to Park Farm, Sandwell Valley Country Park, West Bromwich, which is close to previously recorded medieval ridge and furrow. No evidence associated with possible medieval activity was revealed and no significant archaeological features or finds were encountered during the evaluation.**

## **Introduction**

1.1. Planning permission has been granted by Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council for the development of a site at Sandwell Valley Country Park, West Bromwich, a new children's play barn with associated area (Planning Ref. no. DC/05/44855). Because the site lies within an area of archaeological potential and medieval ridge and furrow was recorded on the site (Hewitt and Hodder 1988), it was considered that potential archaeological remains associated with medieval or earlier activity might survive on the site. It was therefore a condition of planning permission that an archaeological field evaluation be undertaken prior to the commencement of the development. The archaeological evaluation would aim to provide the Planning Authority with information on the likely survival, extent and nature of archaeological remains within the site and to determine whether further archaeological recording was required.

1.2. A programme of fieldwork, in accordance with a brief prepared by the Borough Archaeologist on behalf of the Planning Authority, consisting of the excavation of two archaeological evaluation trenches, was commissioned from the Warwickshire Museum Archaeology Projects Group and carried out in June 2010. This report presents the results of that work. The project archive will be deposited with the Sandwell Community History and Archives Service under the site code CHSVPB10.

## **2. Location**

2.1. The site is located on the south side of the approach road to Park Farm, off Salters Lane, Sandwell Valley Country park, West Bromwich (NGR SP 0149 9153) in the Metropolitan Borough of Sandwell (Fig. 1). The development site is part of a paddock or pasture field and was grassed at the time of the evaluation.

2.2. The underlying geology of the area is Mercia Mudstone with alluvial sand and clay (British Geological Survey 1955 and 2006).

## **3. Aims and Methods of the Evaluation**

3.1. The evaluation was designed to discover the date, nature and state of preservation of any archaeological deposits which might be present within the area of the development.

3.2 The work undertaken involved the examination of early map evidence as well as records of archaeological remains in the area and local historical journals and other publications. The excavation of two evaluation trenches designed to cover a representative sample of the area to be developed followed this. The trenches were located within the proposed new footprint or area most likely to be affected by the development.

3.3 The artefact content of the topsoil was assessed by inspecting the spoil from the trenches and found to be negligible.

## 4. Archaeological and Historical Background

4.1 West Bromwich existed by the time of Domesday book in 1086 when it was known as *Brom Wich*, suggesting a place where broom grew, and it had a population that can be estimated at c.65. By 1377 172 poll tax payers were recorded in the village, known as West Bromwich. The name was starting to be used at this time, probably to distinguish the area from Castle Bromwich and Little Bromwich to the east. The population was probably scattered in smaller dispersed settlements during medieval period with the main concentration being at Lyndon, south of the parish church, which is first mentioned in the 14th century (VCH 1976, 1-4, Hodder 1990, 30, 32). Other concentrations were located at Finchpath, where the road to Wednesbury crossed the River Tame, and to the south near West Bromwich Heath along the Birmingham to Wolverhampton road (VCH 1976, 1-4).

4.2 It has been suggested that the early settlement of Bromwich lay south of what is today Heath Lane, west of the parish church, and that the early manor house, known from at least the 1220s was located at the west end of Heath Lane in the area known as Hall End. This arrangement has been suggested as having been part of a planned landscape laid out after the succession of the de Offeni family to the manor in the early 12th century. The open field system associated with the village has been identified and consisted of Lyndon field to the south of the parish church and Napney and Wigmore fields to the north. To the south what appear to have been areas of assarting have been identified in the area of Lyndon (Hodder 1990, 30-33).

4.3 The remains of the 12th-century Sandwell Priory (Scheduled Monument No. 21656) are located within Sandwell Valley Country Park (not shown on Fig 1), but these lie 1km to the east of the site. There is evidence of medieval activity in the immediate vicinity as ridge and furrow is recorded on the site (MBL 2860, 4046, Hewitt and Hodder 1988) as well as to the north (MBL 2859 and 2862, 4045 and 4048)



Fig 2: Detail from Ordnance Survey 1 inch to one mile map of 1833

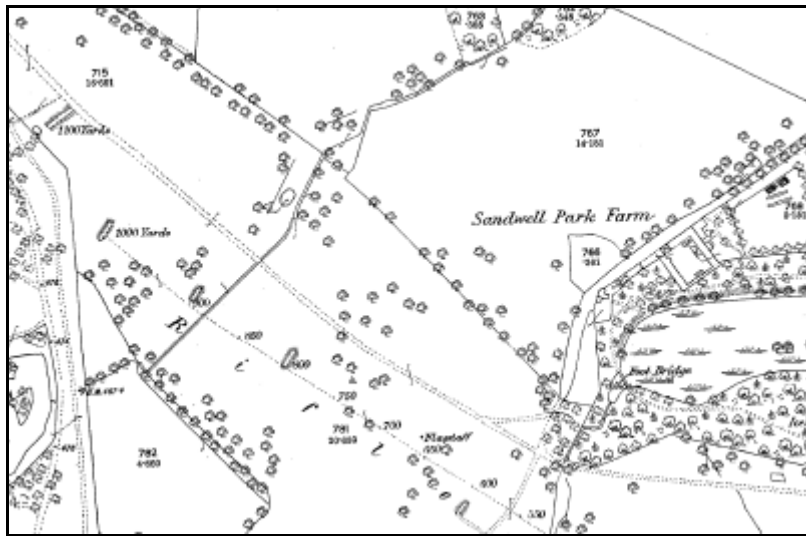


Fig. 3: Detail from Ordnance Survey 1:10650 map of 1891

and north-east (MBL 2863, 4049) of the site. An earthwork, possibly a holloway (MBL 2861, 4047), is recorded to the north of the site and this may be related to a medieval agricultural activity in the vicinity and be part of a longer distance route way.

4.4 The area is shown on the Ordnance Survey 1 inch to 1 mile map of 1833, on which Sandwell Hall, Sandwell Farm and nearby villages are recorded (Ordnance Survey 1831, Fig 2). The site itself lies immediately to the east of Dartmouth Park (MBL 3135, 6586) a Grade II registered park and garden (Registered No 2104). The land was originally leased by the Earl of Dartmouth and opened as a park in 1878. The park was further extended in 1887 to provide a bowling green and boating pool. The boundary of the park runs adjacent to the site and is marked by a post-medieval wall (MBL 2896, 4083). The park is shown on the First Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1889 and the Second Edition map of 1904 (Ordnance Survey 1889 and 1904).

4.5 The site itself was part of a rifle range used by the Midland Rifle Club and other rifle clubs at the end of the 19th century and the rifle range is marked on the First Edition map of 1889 and Ordnance Survey 1:10650 map of 1891 (Ordnance Survey 1889 and 1891, Fig 3). Zigzag military practice trenches (MBL2941, 4230) to the north-west of the site may be associated with the military use of the area or as part of the rifle range.

4.6 The map evidence indicates that the site remained undeveloped throughout the post-medieval period and into the 20th century as it remained part of the Earl of Dartmouth's estate. Land including the site was acquired by Sandwell Borough from the Earl of Dartmouth in 1947 and became Sandwell Valley Country Park in 1983.

## 5. Evaluation Trenches

5.1. Two evaluation trenches (1 and 2) were excavated by a JCB-type machine with a 1.6m wide toothless ditching bucket. The machining was observed and supervised by an archaeologist and overburden or topsoil deposits were excavated in spits until significant archaeological deposits or features were revealed. The total area of the trenches was approximately 80m<sup>2</sup> and represented an approximate 2% sample of the development area (Fig 4). The alignment of the trenches was amended slightly to avoid apparent water services, and this was agreed with the Borough Archaeologist.

## Trench 1

5.2 Trench 1 was located in the south-east end of the site and was 20m long and 2m wide (Fig 4). Due to the absence of significant archaeological deposits it was excavated in spits down to geologically deposited natural reddish brown sandy clay (104). The natural sand and clay (104) occurred at a depth of 0.9m below ground level at the eastern end of the trench. There was a gradual natural slope from 134.39m aOD at the western end to 133.44m aOD towards the eastern end. The natural contained no apparent significant archaeological inclusions. The natural clay showed evidence of desiccation cracks forming polygonal shapes with the cracks filled by sand or silt (Fig 6). These geological formations reflect the subsequent drying out of geological flood or waterside deposits.

5.3 At the eastern end of the trench a linear cut for a land drain (102), 7.8m long and 0.2m wide, was recorded extending west to east along the trench (Fig 5). This cut extended beyond the limit of excavation and was filled with a brownish yellow sandy loam (103).

5.4 A layer of grey sandy silt loam (101), which possibly included a previous topsoil deposit was recorded across the trench. It varied in thickness from 0.65m-0.75m at the eastern end (Fig 5, Section A).

5.5 The uppermost layer (100) in the trench was a dark grey sandy loam that contained few inclusions, such as pebbles and occasional tile or pottery fragments. It was 0.25m thick and with the turf line formed the current ground surface at the time of the work.



Fig 6: Trench 1: showing land drain (103) and natural desiccation cracks

## Trench 2

5.6 Trench 2 was 21m long and 1.9m wide and located in the south-eastern part of the site. The trench was orientated roughly west to east trench (Fig 4) revealing the natural sandy clays (202), which occurred in the base of the trench at a depth of 1.1m.

5.7 A natural slope was again recorded from west to east dropping from 135.61m aOD to 134.68m aOD. The natural reddish brown sandy clay was overlaid by a 0.70m thick layer of yellowish brown sandy loam (201). This was possibly an earlier topsoil or a plough soil deposit, which was also recorded across the trench (Fig 7).

5.8 No archaeological features or other significant deposits were revealed in the trench and only a simple deposit sequence was recorded.

5.9 A dark grey sandy loam topsoil deposit (200) similar to that recorded elsewhere on the site overlaid layer 201. The topsoil was 0.2m to 0.25m thick and contained a clay pipe stem fragment and fragments of 18th- to 20th-century pottery.



Fig 7: Trench 2: general view looking east



## 6. Conclusions

6.1 The evaluation trenches revealed no evidence of medieval or significant post-medieval activity on the site. No evidence of the suggested ridge and furrow was identified either as surviving visible earthworks or as buried remains. It is possible that such evidence had been previously truncated or removed by activity associated with the creation of Dartmouth Park in 1877 or more recent groundworks such as ploughing. However it is more likely the extent of the ridge and furrow recorded and visible to the south of the site is confined to that area and did not extend as far as the site.

6.2 No evidence of prehistoric activity was recorded and the only finds were post-medieval pottery, which represented a normal small assemblage resulting from low level activities on or around the site during the 19th and 20th centuries.

## Acknowledgements

The Warwickshire Museum would like to thank Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council for commissioning the work. Thanks are also due to Dr Graham Eyre-Morgan, Borough Archaeologist for his advice and to Chris Moore, Sandwell Valley Country Park Manager, for providing additional information about the site. Work on site was carried out by Rob Jones and Kevin Wright. This report was written by Peter Thompson. Illustrations were by Candy Stevens. It was checked by Catherine Coutts.

## Bibliography

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Hodder, M. 1990a The Medieval Landscape of West Bromwich in *Transactions of the South Staffordshire Archaeological and Historical Society Vol 30, 1988-89*

Morris, J. (ed.) 1976 *Domesday Book 23, Warwickshire, Chichester*

Ordnance Survey 1833 *First Edition One Inch One Mile map Lichfield sheet*

Ordnance Survey 1891 *Staffordshire sheet 068/NW 1:10560*

Ordnance Survey 1904 *Ordnance Survey 1:2500 maps*

Sandwell MBC 2010 *Archaeological Evaluation – Proposed Play Barn, Sandwell Valley, West Bromwich*

VCH 1976 *The Victoria History of the County of Staffordshire, Vol. XVII, Offlow Hundred, London*

## Appendix A: List of Finds

<i>Context</i>	<i>Material</i>	<i>Quantity</i>	<i>Date/Comments</i>
<b>Trench 1</b>			
100	Pottery	9	19th-/20th-century
<b>Trench 2</b>			
200	Clay pipe	1	Pipe stem
200	Pottery	7	18th- to 20th-century

## Appendix B: List of Contexts

### Trench 1

<i>Context</i>	<i>Description</i>
100	Topsoil
101	Former topsoil layer
102	Modern cut
103	Fill of 102
104	Natural

### Trench 2

<i>Context</i>	<i>Description</i>
200	Topsoil
201	Former topsoil layer
202	Natural

## Appendix C: Photographic record

SITE CODE		CHSVPB10 BLACK & WHITE PRINTS/COLOUR IMAGES					Photo graph er
Slide	Neg.	Digital	Subject	Dire ction	Date		
	1/14		Record		15/07/10	RJ	
1	1/15	CHPBSV10-01	Pre-excavation site shot	NW	15/07/10	RJ	
2	1/16	CHPBSV10-02	Trench 2: General shot	N	15/07/10	RJ	
3	1/17	CHPBSV10-03	Trench 2: General shot	SE	15/07/10	RJ	
4	1/18	CHPBSV10-04	Site general view	SE	15/07/10	RJ	
5	1/19	CHPBSV10-05	Overall site	SE	15/07/10	RJ	



**Appendix D: Archaeological brief for Proposed Play Barn, Sandwell Valley,  
West Bromwich**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION**

**PROPOSED PLAY BARN, SANDWELL VALLEY, WEST BROMWICH**

**SANDWELL MBC**

**April 2010**





**Site:** The Area Proposed for a Children's Play Barn Sandwell Valley, West Bromwich

**Planning Application:** DC/10/51963

**Agent:** Gary Dowie Corporate Property Division, Sandwell M.B.C. (0121 569 4649)

**Planning Officer:** John Dadd (0121 569 4269)

**Borough Archaeologist:** Graham Eyre-Morgan (0121 569 4025)

*This archaeological brief is only valid for six months. After this period the Borough Archaeologist should be contacted. Any written scheme of investigation resulting from this brief shall only be considered for the same period. The contractor is strongly advised to visit the site before completing their written scheme of investigation, as there may be implications for accurately costing the project.*

### **1. Introduction**

The brief for this site has been prepared by the Borough Archaeologist of Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council. The brief sets out the requirements for an archaeological evaluation by trial trenching. The purpose of evaluation is to determine the presence/absence of archaeological features within the application area so that an informed decision can be made on their preservation or otherwise. This Brief and any resulting Contractors' Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) will ensure that the requirements of the Condition can be adequately discharged.

### **2. Site Location and Description**

The proposed location for the play barn is set within the Sandwell Valley Country Park, north-west of the Pavilion on the road to Sandwell Park Farm adjacent to the bowling green and boating lake in Dartmouth Park. The proposed development area is a neatly grassed field/verge that forms part of the green frame to the road to Park Farm.

### **3. Planning Background**

**DC/10/51963 - New play facility for 5-14 year old children with associated landscaping and car parking.**



#### 4. Archaeological Background

The Sandwell Valley is important archaeologically containing several well-preserved archaeological sites of all periods. The absence of disturbance of the Valley by modern residential or extensive industrial development means that the known sites are not isolated but together form a total historic landscape of regional importance, and that other sites, as yet undiscovered may be present. It is therefore essential that future management policies ensure the preservation of these sites. The archaeological sites are complementary to the natural aspects of the Valley and should be afforded the due attention to ensure their preservation. Other archaeological remains could also be revealed. **Should archaeology be discovered it is possible that further archaeological work may required at the site before any development may take place.**

The proposed development site is on the Sandwell HER as the location of what is described as medieval ridge and furrow earthwork. The HER states the ridge and furrow is centred on SP 0147 9155 and Known as Lodgehill Road ridge and furrow. Reference: Hewitt NR and Hodder M A. 1988. A landscape survey of Sandwell Valley, 1982-1987. 28. TSSAHS. 28

#### 5. Requirement for Work

5.1 The purpose of the archaeological investigation is to locate and identify any surviving remains within the constraint area; in this particular instance this office wishes to know the extent, the date, nature and state of preservation of any archaeological deposits, which may be present under the area, proposed for development. The work must also assess the relative importance of these deposits and the potential loss of any archaeological information by the development, therefore substantiating any need for further excavation or change in the planning consent

5.2 It is proposed that 2x20x2m trial trenches are excavated at the development area, a trench plan must be appended to the specification.

5.3 The site-specific aims are:

- To establish the presence/absence of archaeological remains within the development area



6.5 The site code for this project is CHSVPB10

6.6 All the latest Health and Safety guidelines shall be followed on site.

6.7 Should the client wish to curtail the investigation for any reason at any point in advance of its completion the contractor will still be expected to produce a full report including specialist finds assessments within the timetable set out below.

6.8 The IFA's *Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Evaluations* should be used for additional guidance in the production of the written scheme of investigation, the content of the report, and the general execution of the project.

## **7. Evaluation Methodology**

7.1 The contractor shall ensure detailed study of all mains service locations and avoid damage to these.

7.2 Prior to the commencement of on-site works the contractor must consult the Sandwell Sites and Monuments Record and undertake a rapid map regression exercise based on the sources held at the Local Studies Section of Smethwick Library. This information will assist in on-site interpretation.

7.3 It is recommended that 2 x20mx2m trenches of the area to be developed is investigated by trial trenching. The trial trenches will be machine excavated using a toothless ditching bucket, and under the supervision and to the satisfaction of a professional archaeologist. The exposed sub-soil or archaeological horizon will be hand cleaned in all trenches and any archaeological deposits or negative features planned.

7.4 At least 50% of all contained features shall be excavated. A stated percentage of structural and linear features to be excavated shall be provided in the WSI. For those trenches where substantial nineteenth and twentieth century masonry remains are encountered hand dug test pits will be excavated within the trench in order to examine the presence/absence of earlier remains. NOTE: In some circumstances it may be necessary to use shoring to support the

sides of the trench, but advice must be sought from the Borough Archaeologist before employing this methodology.

7.5 Details of how all archaeological contexts and artefacts will be excavated, surveyed, recovered and recorded shall be provided. The site grid will be tied to the national grid.

7.6 Details of the site planning policy shall be given in the WSI. The normal preferred policy for the scale of archaeological site plans is 1:20 and sections at 1:10, unless circumstances indicate that other scales would be more appropriate.

7.7 The photographic record shall consist of high quality digital colour and black and white copies. This shall include both general and feature specific photographs; a photographic scale (including north arrow) shall be included in the case of detailed photographs. A photographic register and supporting plan detailing as a minimum feature number, location, and direction of shot shall accompany the photographic record.

7.8 The contractor must arrange, through a suitably qualified specialist, the assessment of the environmental and metallurgical potential of the site through the examination of suitable deposits. Guidance should be sought from the appropriate English Heritage Regional Advisor in Archaeological Science and details of the methodology included within the WSI.

## **8.0 Finds**

8.1 All finds, where appropriate, shall be washed and marked with both the site code and context number.

8.2 The WSI shall include an agreed list of specialist consultants who might be required to conserve and/or report on finds, and advise or report on other aspects of the investigation.

8.3 Finds work should be to accepted professional standards and adhere to the Institute of Field Archaeologists *Guidelines for Finds Work*. Details of the finds retrieval policy must be included within the WSI.

8.4 The requirements for conservation and storage shall be agreed with Wednesbury Museum prior to the start of work, and confirmed in writing with the Borough Archaeologist.

## **9.0 Results**

9.1 The draft full report including all specialist assessments of artefact assemblages shall be submitted to the Borough Archaeologist within six weeks of completing the fieldwork for approval. Once approved a total of six copies plus a copy on CD-ROM are to be supplied to the Borough Archaeologist for general distribution.

9.2 The report must contain:

- The aims and methods adopted during the course of the evaluation.
- Detailed results including a suitable conclusion and discussion. This must be linked to the research objectives cited above and consider the sites in their local, regional and national context.
- An assessment of the local, regional national importance of the site.
- Impact Assessment and recommended mitigation strategy will be used to assess the impact of the proposal on the surviving archaeological resource.
- The contractor is also expected to formulate a mitigation strategy and future research programme. The latter should be based on national/regional/local research frameworks and identify the aims/objectives of any future excavation.
- Although the emphasis should be on those deposits that are likely to be destroyed, the wider potential the site must also be considered
- A concise non-technical summary of the project results
- All specialist reports and assessments
- Site location plan, copies of any historical maps and a representative sample of the photographs including colour prints
- Location plan of trenches in relation to the proposed development. All corners of each trench shall be given a 10 figure grid reference
- A section/s within each trench showing the depth of deposits including the present ground level with Ordnance Datum, vertical and horizontal scale

- Sufficient plans by period and area to aid interpretation
- Artefact illustrations that would be submitted in any future publication

9.3 The following appendices should also be included:

- Location and summary of the archive contents
- Completed summary sheet (copy attached to brief)
- Photographic register
- Archaeological brief, the approved contractors' written scheme of investigation together with the completed pro-forma and site location plan which were submitted as part of the planning application

9.4 The proposed format of the report will be described within the WSI.

## **10.0 Archive**

10.1 Before commencing any fieldwork, the Contractor must contact the Community History and Archives Service, Smethwick Library (High Street, Smethwick, West Midlands B661AB. Tel. 0121 5582561), to determine the requirements for the deposition of the archive.

10.2 The archive should include the record photographs and digital information together with a copy of the Report.

10.3 Photographic prints should be re-produced at a minimum of five by four inches and labelled on the back using indelible ink with the frame number, date, photographers name together with the site code, name and grid reference; the photographs being mounted in archival quality sleeves.

10.4 It is the responsibility of the Contractor to meet the Community History and Archives Service requirements with regard to the preparation of material for deposition.

10.5 Written notification of the commencement of fieldwork shall be given to Community History and Archives Service at the same time as the Borough Archaeologist.

10.6 A summary of the contents of the archive shall be supplied to Borough Archaeologist at the time of deposition.

10.7 Sandwell MBC supports the Online Access to Index of Archaeological Investigations (OASIS) project. The overall aim of the OASIS project is to provide an online index to the mass of archaeological grey literature that has been produced as a result of the advent of large-scale developer funded fieldwork. The archaeological contractor must therefore complete the online OASIS form at <http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/project/oasis/>. Contractors are advised to contact Sandwell MBC Sites and Monuments Record prior to completing the form. Once a report has become a public document by submission to or incorporation into the SMR, Sandwell MBC Sites and Monuments Record may place the information on a web-site. Please ensure that you and your client agree to this procedure in writing as part of the process of submitting the report to the case officer at Sandwell MBC.

#### **11.0 Monitoring**

11.1 The Borough Archaeologist will be responsible for monitoring progress and standards throughout the project and should be kept regularly informed during fieldwork, interpretation and reporting stages.

11.2 Written Notification of the start date will be given to the Borough Archaeologist at least one week before the commencement of work and once the fieldwork stage of the investigation has been completed.

#### **12.0 Contractors Written Scheme of Investigation**

12.1 Any variations to the WSI shall be agreed in writing with the Borough Archaeologist before being implemented.

12.2 This Brief has been written following a cursory examination of the site by the Borough Archaeologist, potential contractors are therefore strongly advised to carry out their own inspection before submitting a written quotation.

12.3 If on first visiting the site or at any time during the recording exercise, it appears that:

i) part or the whole of the site is not amenable to the recording programme outlined above, and/or

ii) an alternative approach may be more appropriate or likely to produce more informative results, and/or

iii) any features that should be recorded as having a bearing on the interpretation of the site have been omitted,

then it is expected that the Contractor will contact the Borough Archaeologist as a matter of urgency.

**SANDWELL MBC SMR  
SUMMARY SHEET**

<b>Site name/Address:</b> Children's Play Barn Sandwell Valley	
<b>Borough:</b> Sandwell	<b>NGR:</b>
<b>Type of Work:</b> Archaeological Evaluation	<b>Site Code:</b> CHSVPB10
<b>Contractor:</b>	<b>Date of Work:</b>
<b>Location of Finds/Curating Museum:</b>	
<b>Title of Report:</b>	
<b>SUMMARY OF FIELDWORK RESULTS:</b>	
<b>Author of Summary:</b>	<b>Date of Summary:</b>

**For further information regarding the content of this Brief please contact the author at the address below. As part of our desire to provide a quality service, we would welcome any comments you may have on the content and presentation of this Archaeological Brief.**

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**Appendix E: Proposal for Archaeological Fieldwork off Salters  
lane, Sandwell Valley Country Park, West Bromwich**

**Environment and Economy**

Warwickshire Museum Field Services  
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The Butts  
Warwick CV34 4SS  
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petethompson@warwickshire.gov.uk  
[www.warwickshire.gov.uk/fieldarchaeology](http://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/fieldarchaeology)

**Archaeology Projects Group**

Proposal for Archaeological Evaluation

Planning Application DC10/ 51963

# **Proposed Play Barn, off Salters Lane, Sandwell Valley Country Park, West Bromwich**

## **1. Introduction**

1.1 Planning permission has been granted by Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council for a proposed children's Play Barn located off Salters Lane within the Sandwell Valley, West Bromwich (DC/10/51963). The site is located on the north side of Dartsmouth Park and on the south side of the road to Park Farm in Sandwell Valley Country Park (SP 0152 9147) and is currently grassed verge area. The proposed development includes a play barn and outdoor play facilities for 5-14 year old children with associated car parking.

1.2 The site of the proposed development is in an area of archaeological potential within the Sandwell Valley Country Park and medieval ridge and furrow is recorded close to the site (Hewitt and Hodder 1988). The site may contain potential archaeological remains associated with medieval settlement or earlier activity in the vicinity. The proposed development may reveal or damage archaeological remains and it has therefore been a condition of the planning consent that a programme of archaeological fieldwork be undertaken. A field evaluation will be carried out on the site in order to obtain further information about the below ground archaeological remains surviving on the site so that a scheme for mitigation of the impact of the development could be prepared. The following programme would be carried out by the Warwickshire Museum Field Archaeology Section.

1.3 Warwickshire Museum Field Services Archaeology Projects Group have been asked to provide a costed proposal for a programme of archaeological evaluation. This document comprises that proposal and represents a written scheme of investigation.

## **2. Strategy**

2.1 The archaeological programme would be carried out in accordance with the brief for a programme of Archaeological Evaluation (December 2009) issued by the

Borough Archaeologist of Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council. The evaluation would provide information, as far as possible, on the nature of the archaeological resource on the site and aim to gather sufficient details of the extent, character, state of preservation and date of any below ground remains within the site. This would allow an assessment of the archaeological remains within the proposed development site in accordance with Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment (2010) including heritage policies HE6, HE9, HE10, HE11 and HE12.

2.2 The evaluation would aim to identify the potential for archaeological remains associated with medieval or other activity from the site and in the vicinity.

2.3 Historical maps (printed and manuscripts), aerial photographs and other relevant background material held by the Sandwell Sites and Monuments Record and local library would be examined.

2.4 A brief summary of the results of the evaluation would be presented, if necessary, at an appropriate site meeting to discuss the results of the fieldwork.

2.5 All work would be undertaken to Warwickshire Museum standards and to the appropriate Standard and Guidance of the Institute of for Archaeologists.

## **5. Archaeological Programme**

3.1 An archaeological field evaluation (trial trenching) has been proposed, consisting of two proposed trial trenches, each 20m long and 2m wide totalling 80m<sup>2</sup> and would be located across the site. The location and the exact dimensions of the trenches would be agreed with the Borough Archaeologist. The position of the trenches may require slight alteration should particular areas of contamination are identified and if buried features such as services are unexpectedly encountered. If it was necessary to vary the location or dimensions of trenches due to health and safety or archaeological requirements such variations would be notified and agreed with the Borough Archaeologist.

5.5 The agreed fieldwork project code has been designated by the Borough Archaeologist prior to the commencement of fieldwork and would be CHSVPB10.

## **6. Evaluation (Trial Trenching)**

4.1 The trial trenching would be undertaken within the application site in agreed positions. Two 20m long trenches would be excavated. Modern deposits, including topsoil and extensive make-up deposits would be removed by machine with an appropriate sized machine, with a toothless ditching bucket, under archaeological supervision down to undisturbed archaeological deposits. Excavation would then proceed by hand. The artefact content of the topsoil would be assessed by sampling topsoil or examining spoil heaps with sieving undertaken, if appropriate.

4.2 A representative sample of at least 50% of archaeological features located in the evaluation would be excavated. Postholes and pits would be half-sectioned. Full excavation of such features would take place where questions of date, nature and form had not been answered by the initial half-sectioning. Linear features, such as ditches and gullies would be sampled at appropriate intervals to allow approximately 15% to 20% of the revealed feature to be excavated. All features would be recorded using the Warwickshire Museum's standard archaeological recording system and plans and cross sections would be drawn at appropriate scales.

4.3 Warwickshire Museum's standard archaeological recording system (Warwickshire Museum Field Archaeology Projects Group Procedures Manual 2007). All archaeological contexts would be recorded using pro forma context sheets with standardised descriptions following Soil Survey soil texture terminology and Munsell colour descriptions. Details of the deposit sequence or site stratigraphy would be recorded. Where substantial 19th- or 20th- century masonry remains are revealed the presence or absence of earlier remains would be evaluated by hand dug test pits or the partial removal of extensive deposits by machine where appropriate with the agreement of the Borough Archaeologist.

4.4 Plans and cross sections of archaeological deposits and features would be drawn at appropriate scales, typically and plans at 1:20 and cross sections at 1:10, other scales (e.g. 1:5, 1:50) would be used if appropriate. The evaluation trenches would be recorded and appropriate levels would be measured and recorded in relation to Ordnance Datum. The evaluation trenches, plans, sections and position of archaeological features or deposits would be surveyed and located in relation to the National Ordnance Survey Grid. Survey and measurement of the archaeological remains would normally be carried out using EDM or other appropriate survey instruments.

4.5 All finds or significant artefacts would be collected with a record of their contexts and locations. Finds would be assigned to a context, labelled and retained for of small metalwork finds surviving on the site. A metal detector would be used if it was appropriate to test for the presence of and to aid the recovery of small metal objects.

4.6 A photographic record would be made of features, groups of features and significant archaeological deposits using high quality digital colour images and black and white copies. Photographs would also include general site shots illustrating the progress and context of the archaeological work.

4.7 In the unlikely event of any human remains being revealed these would not be excavated and left *in situ*. Such remains would be recorded and any subsequent excavation or removal would take place under appropriate conditions and comply with Ministry of Justice and local environmental health regulations.

4.8 If a significant assemblage of pre-modern pottery were recovered during the evaluation this would be assessed by Stephanie Ratkai in order to provide spot-dating and a summary of the nature of the assemblage.

4.9 An appropriate sampling strategy would be agreed on site if deposits with potential environmental remains were revealed. Particular attention would be paid to any charred remains or waterlogged deposits found. If significant archaeological remains are revealed an appropriate sampling strategy will be agreed on site.

4.10 If environmental assessment work were required any necessary reporting would be carried out by Liz Pearson, Environmental Archaeologist of Worcestershire Historic Environment and Archaeology Service or suitably qualified experienced environmental specialist. Further processing and analysis work may be required depending on the suitability of deposits and resulting samples.

4.11 On completion the trenches would normally be backfilled with excavated soil, but no allowance is made for the specialist reinstatement or consolidation of the ground.

## **5. Archive and Reports**

5.1 A report of the results of the archaeological evaluation would be produced following the completion of trial trenching. The report would be completed in the standard Warwickshire Museum format. This would include a description of the methodology employed, an account of the archaeological evidence and interpretation and assessment of importance of appropriate remains.

5.2 The report would include a brief historical background to the site, a description of the methodology used and details of the aims and methods used during the evaluation.

5.3 Site location plans showing survey areas, the location of trenches dug and features located would be included. Plans and sections showing principal stratigraphy and features within the evaluation trenches would be produced at an appropriate scale. A description and interpretation of the revealed deposits and a description of artefacts or ecofacts recovered, with a list of finds and spot dates, where significant, would also be included.

5.4 Six copies of the report will be provided for the Borough Archaeologist with a digital version on computer disk. Once approved three copies would be provided for the client and one copy for the Local Authority Planning Officer. The summary results of the work would also be published in an appropriate local or period archaeological publication. An integrated and consistent project archive including both artefacts/ecofacts and project documentation would be prepared in accordance with the English Heritage guidance document *Management of Archaeological Projects 2* (1991) upon completion of the project.

5.5 The archaeological archive resulting from the work would be deposited in an appropriate Museum or local institution; this is expected to ultimately be Wednesbury Museum and Smethwick Library, along with any finds, subject to the consent of the landowner.

## 6. Programme

6.1 The initial phase of the archaeological programme, evaluation (trial trenching) will be undertaken prior to the commencement of the development of a proposed play barn on the site south of the approach road to Park Farm, Sandwell Valley Country Park, West Bromwich.

### 6.2 Archaeological fieldwork

(Estimated 3 days including machining depending on the complexity of archaeological remains and ground conditions)

Fieldwork (Evaluation)

Plant hire (JCB- type with toothless bucket) 2 days (including backfill)

Staffing Project Manager/Supervisor 1 day

Archaeologists (x2-3) 6 person days

### 6.3 Background Research and Report Preparation (6 weeks from completion of fieldwork)

Consultation of Sandwell SMR/Local

library documentary records 0.5 day

Project Manager/editor 1 day

Project Officer 4 days

Finds processing/archive 1 day

Draughtsperson 1 day

Finds specialists as necessary

## 7. Health and Safety

7.1 The Warwickshire Museum will conduct all works in accordance with the Health

and Safety at Work Act 1974 and Warwickshire Museum Field Services Health and Safety Policy. A risk assessment, which all staff will be made aware of, will be undertaken prior to commencement of fieldwork.

## 8. Quality Control

8.1 Warwickshire Museum is a Registered Archaeological Organisation with the Institute of Field Archaeology and therefore all work will be undertaken in accordance with relevant IFA Code of Conduct, Standards, Guidance and Practices.

8.2 Warwickshire Museum Field Services Archaeology Projects Group operates an internal quality control system whereby projects are managed by an Archaeological Field Officer who is responsible for the quality of the work involved. Archaeological Field Officers report to the Principal Field Archaeologist who is responsible for all project work. All finished reports and publications are checked by the Operations Manager, Principal Archaeologist or another senior member of staff. The Institute of Field Archaeologist's Code of Conduct has been formally adopted by Warwickshire County Council.

8.3 The Principal Archaeologist reports to the County Archaeologist who bears ultimate responsibility for the conduct of all Projects Group activity and determines all matters of policy. Warwickshire County Council has a formal complaint procedure, details of which are available on request.

## 9. Insurances

9.1 Warwickshire Museum as part of Warwickshire County Council holds Public Liability Insurance to a limit of £25,000,000, Products Liability Insurance to a limit of £25,000,000 and Employers' Liability to a limit of £25,000,000.

## 10. Quotation

	Background Research		
	Research visit/search	£***	
10.1	Fieldwork		
	Archaeological staff costs	£***	
	Travel, Materials, Overheads etc	£***	
	Toilet/site H&S hire	£**	
	Plant hire (JCB excavator)	£***	
			£***
10.2	<i>Report Preparation, Archive preparation etc.</i>		
	Staff costs	£****	
	Materials, Overheads etc	£***	
			£*****#
	<b>Total</b>		£*****

**Contingency (in the event of significant specialist remains being revealed)**

9.4 A contingency sum has been included in the quotation for unusual or unexpected features or finds, if required. The contingency sum would not be initiated without consultation with and agreement of the client and the Borough Archaeologist.

Contingency sums

Finds specialist £\*\*\*

Environmental specialist £\*\*\*

9.5 The trial trenching will require the removal of existing topsoil and overburden in trench locations. Once the field evaluation is complete the trenches will be backfilled with excavated spoil, but any specialist requirements regarding backfilling, consolidation or reinstatement of trenches are the responsibility of the client.

This quotation excludes any VAT payable and remains valid until 30th December 2010.

Warwickshire Museum

June 2010

## **Appendix: Key Staff**

### Warwickshire Museum Field Archaeology Projects Group

Principal Field Archaeologist

NICHOLAS PALMER

*Qualifications:* BA (MA) in Jurisprudence, University of Oxford, 1975

*Experience:* Site Supervisor, Oxford Archaeological Unit, 1974-6  
Assistant Director, Haughmond Abbey, DoE, 1977-9  
Post Excavation Assistant, Oxford Archaeological Unit, 1978-80  
Archaeologist, Warwickshire Museum, 1980-1995  
Senior Field Archaeologist, Warwickshire Museum, 1995-2004  
Principal Field Archaeologist, Warwickshire Museum 2004 -

### *Archaeological Project Managers*

Dr. CATHERINE M. COUTTS

*Qualifications:* BA in Archaeology and Prehistory (2:1), 1983, University of Sheffield  
Ph.D. in Archaeology, University of Sheffield, 1992

*Experience:* Site Assistant/Supervisor, various sites in England, Italy and France, 1977-1987  
Museum Assistant, Scunthorpe Museum and Art Gallery, 1987  
Project Officer, Sheffield's Environmental and Archaeological Research Project in the Hebrides, University of Sheffield, 1988-89  
Archaeological Project Officer, The British School at Rome, 1990-95

Archaeological Field Officer, Warwickshire Museum, 1996-2006  
Archaeological Project Manager 2006-

### STUART C. PALMER

*Qualifications:* Postgraduate Diploma in Field Archaeology, University of Oxford, 1997

*Experience:* Site Assistant, Warwickshire Museum 1982-1986  
Site Supervisor, Warwickshire Museum, 1986-1992  
Assistant Archaeological Field Officer, Warwickshire Museum, 1992-1997  
Archaeological Field Officer, Warwickshire Museum, 1997-2006  
Archaeological Project Manager 2006-

### PETER THOMPSON

*Qualifications:* BA in Archaeology (2:2), University of Wales, Lampeter, 1981  
PGCE, Nottingham University, 1983

*Experience:* Site Assistant, various sites in England, 1984-1986  
Assistant Site Supervisor/Site Supervisor, CEU, English Heritage 1985, 1986  
Senior Archaeologist, Museum of London Archaeological Services, 1986-2000  
***Part-time lecturer in Romano-British archaeology, Birkbeck College, London, 1995-2000***  
***Archaeological Field Officer, Warwickshire Museum, 2000-2006***  
Archaeological Project Manager 2006-

### *Project Officer*

### CHRISTOPHER JONES

*Qualifications* BA in Archaeology (2:2), University of Liverpool, 1980  
Post Graduate Diploma in Post Excavation Studies, University of Leicester, 1984  
Associate of the Institute of Field Archaeologists, 1988

*Experience* Site Assistant, various sites, 1979-83  
Supervisor, various sites, 1983-87  
Project Director, Sandwell Valley Archaeology Project, 1987-88  
Assistant Borough Archaeologist, Sandwell 1988-89  
Excavations Officer, Hulton Abbey Project 1989-90  
Excavation Supervisor, Stafford Castle 1991  
Assistant Field Officer, Warwickshire Museum 1993-2005  
Project Officer 2005-

### BRYN GETHIN

*Qualifications:* BA in Archaeology (2:1), University of Wales, Lampeter, 1992

*Experience:* Excavator, Stafford Castle, 1990-92  
Site Assistant, Warwickshire Museum, 1993-2000  
Senior Archaeological Technician, Warwickshire Museum, 2000-2005  
Project Officer 2005-

### *Archaeological Illustrators*



## ANDREW ISHAM

*Experience:* Site Assistant, Warwickshire Museum, 1986  
Air Photo Assistant, Warwickshire Museum, 1987-88  
Archaeological Draughtsperson, Warwickshire Museum, 1987-97  
Archaeological Illustrator/Technician, Warwickshire Museum,  
1997-

## CANDIDA STEVENS

*Experience:* Archaeological Draughtsperson, Warwickshire Museum, 1988-97  
Archaeological Illustrator/Technician, Warwickshire Museum,  
1997-

### *Senior Field Technicians*

## KEVIN WRIGHT

*Experience:* Site Assistant, Dudley Castle Project, 1987-89  
Site Assistant, Warwickshire Museum, 1990-93  
Assistant Supervisor, Warwickshire Museum, 1993-  
Senior Archaeological Technician, Warwickshire Museum, 2000-

## ROBERT JONES

*Experience:* Site Assistant, Sandwell Valley Archaeology Project, 1985-86  
Site Assistant, Dudley Castle Project, 1987-89  
Site Assistant, Warwickshire Museum, 1989-  
Senior Archaeological Technician, Warwickshire Museum, 2000

### *Specialists (External and Internal)*

Roman pottery	Jerry Evans
Medieval Pottery	Stephanie Ratkai
Stone objects	Nicholas Palmer
Other finds	As necessary
Charred plant remains	Liz Pearson
Pollen	James Greig
Insects	David Smith



## Appendix F: Sandwell MBC SMR Summary Sheet

### SANDWELL MBC SMR SUMMARY SHEET

<b>Site name/Address:</b> Proposed Play Barn, Sandwell Valley Country Park West Bromwich	
<b>Borough:</b> Sandwell	<b>NGR:</b> SP 0065 9436
<b>Type of Work:</b> Archaeological Evaluation	<b>Site Code:</b> CHSVPB10
<b>Contractor:</b> Archaeology Projects Group, Warwickshire Museum	<b>Date of Work:</b> June 2010
<b>Location of Finds/Curating Museum:</b>	Community History and Archives Service (tba)
<b>Title of Report</b> Archaeological Evaluation on Park Farm Approach Road, Sandwell Valley Country Park, West Bromwich	
<b>SUMMARY OF FIELDWORK RESULTS:</b>	
<b>Geology/Topography</b>  A slight slope of between 0.62m and 0.95m was recorded across the evaluated area from the western side towards the eastern limit of the site	
<b>Late 19th/ 20th century</b>  A single land drain cut was also revealed in two trenches.	
<b>Medieval</b>  No evidence of medieval occupation or activity was recovered from the evaluation	

<i>Author of Summary:</i> Peter Thompson	<i>Date of Summary:</i> September 2010

### Appendix G: Archive Index

<i>Site Name</i>	<b>Proposed Play Barn, Sandwell Valley, West Bromwich</b>	
<i>Site Code</i>	<b>CHSVPB10</b>	
<i>Organisation</i>	<b>Warwickshire Museum Archaeology Projects Group</b>	
<i>Class Number</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>No</i>
1	Index to Archive	1
2	Introduction	1
A.1	Final Report	1
B.1	Site Data site note book	1
B.2	Site Data Primary Context Records	7
B.3	Site Data Context list	1
B4	Site Data Drawings	
C1	Finds Data Finds List	1
C.2	Pottery (sherds)	2
C.3	Tile (Fragments)	4
C.4	Other (stone, glass frags)	0
D.1	Photograph Record	1
D.2	Colour Slides	
D.3	Black and White negatives	6
D.4	Black and White prints	6
D.5	Digital	6
E.1	Environmental/Ecofact Data	None
F.1.a	Documentary – Developer’s plans	1
F.1.b	Documentary -	
G1.a	Correspondence: Sandwell Brief for Archaeological Evaluation	1
G1.b	Correspondence Museum proposal for archaeological evaluation	1
G1.c	Correspondence:	1
H1	Other: CD with report file, archive catalogue	1